

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7748

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY PHMON PENH

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 7189

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, LA, VN

SUBJECT: FRENCH RELATIONS WITH INDO CHINA COUNTRIES

REF: PARIS 6996

SUMMARY: IN TOUR D'HORIZON OF INDOCHINA COUNTRIES,
QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ASIA BOLLE SAID RELATIONS WITH
THE DRV WERE PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY WITH ONLY THE DRV
FAILURE TO NAME AN AMBASSADOR TO INDICATE HANOI'S DIS-
PLEASURE OVER GOVT TREATMENT OF THE PRG. FRENCH ARE
OPTIMISTIC ABOUT LPF ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR AID PROGRAM
FOR LAOS. FRENCH CONSIDER SIHANOUK VISIT AND ESTABLISH-
MENT OF PRG REPRESENTATION TO LPF AS FURTHER INDICATIONS
THAT FORMATION OF NEW LAO GOVERNMENT WILL BE SOON.
COMBODIAN COMMENTS REPORTED REFTEL.

1. FRANCO-DRV RELATIONS. QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR
ASIA(INDOCHINA) BOLLE TOLD EMBOFF MARCH 19 THAT THERE
HAD BEEN NO CHANGE IN FRANCO-DRV RELATIONS FOLLOWING
FRENCH ABSTENTION ON THE VOTE ON PRG PARTICIPATION IN
THE GENEVA LAW OF WAR CONFERENCE. IN FACT THE GVN WAS
MORE UPSET BY THE FRENCH VOTE THAN WAS THE DRV. THE
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ONLY CONTINUING TRACE OF DRV ANNOYANCE WITH FRANCE IS

THE FAILURE TO ASK AGREEMENT FOR AN AMBASSADOR. AS FOR AID, THE DRV IS FURNISHING THE LIST OF HUMANITARIAN SUPPLIES AND THEY ARE BEING PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY THE GOF. THE DRV HAS ALREADY PROPOSED ONE OR TWO PROJECTS WITHIN THE ECONOMIC AID PROGRAM, AND THE FRENCH ARE CONSIDERING THEM, BOLLE NOTED THAT THE PRIMITIVE DRV ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION WOULD HAVE TO BE MODIFIED THRUH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STATE COMPANIES ABLE TO BENEFIT FROM THE LOAN ASPECT OF FRENCH AID.

2. LPF REACTIONTO FRNCH AID TO LAOS. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR HAS DISCUSSED FRENCH AID TO LAOS ONLY IN GENERALITIES DURING HIS TRIP TO SAM NEUA AND IN OTHER CONTACTS WITH LPF FIGURES IN VIENTIANE. HE GOT THE GENERAL IMPRESSION THAT THE LPF IS ANXIOUS TO HAVE FRENCH AID FOR LAOS,PERHAPSINCLUDING FOR LPF ZONE. THE LPF IS NOT YET READY TO DISCUSS DETAILS SINCE IT WILL NOT STUDY THE SPECIFICS OF FOREIGN AID UNTIL AFTER IT HAS ENTERED GOVERNMENT IN VIENTIANE AND IS ABLE TO STUDY AID FROM WITHIN THE LAO MINISTRIES. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR THOUGHT THE LPF HAD DECIDED NOT TO OBJECT TO THE FRENCH MILITARY MISSION OF INSTRUCTION, BUT THAT LPF POSITION ON AUGMENTATION OF THE MISSION WOULD BE REVEALED ONLY AFTER LPF FUNCTIONING IN VIENTIANE.

3. FRENCH VIEW OF RECENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN LAOS. BOLLE SAID THE FRENCH WERE INCREASINGLY OPTIMISTIC THAT THE FORMATION OF THE NEW LAO COALITION GOVERNMENT MIGHT TAKE PLACE IN APRIL. ALTHOUGH PHOUN WAS NOT SO IMPORTANT, AS PHOUMI VONGVICHIT, HIS RETURN TO VIENTIANE WAS A GOOD SIGN, AN THE LATTER MIGHT ALSO ARRIVE NOW THAT THE INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY VISITS APPEARED OVER. THE RETURN OF THE DRV AMBASSADOR LE VAN HIEN WAS PERHAPS AN EVEN CLEARER SIGN OF PROGRESS. THE FRENCH THOUGHT THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PRG REPRESENTATION INSAM NEUA AND THE SIHANOUK VISIT WERE ALSO GOOD SIGNS OF PROGRESS TOWARD THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT, EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE ALSO SIGNS OF THE LESS FAVORABLE--FOR SOUVANNA--ORIENTATION OF THE LPF IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THE GOF CONSIDERED THAT THE PRINCIPAL MOTIVATION FOR

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THE SIHANOUK TRIP AND THE PRG REPRESENTATION WAS TO COMPLETE THE ROUND OF INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY MEETINGS BEGUN BY LE DUAN AND CONTINUED BY THE PRC PARTY DELEGATION. THEY WERE ALSO GOOD INDICATIONS THAT THE NEW LPF FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD PUSH FOR RECOGNITION BY THE RLG OF BOTH MOVEMENTS AS GOVERNMENTS.

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